

RS, RB HFR
JW SM

Dear Jerry,

9/11/72

The most recent of your "this-is-the-last-letter-you-will-ever-receive-from-me" letters came this morning. I like it better than the earlier ones because of its unintended honesty. It is dated 9/2 but the postage meter says, 9/7/72. At the bottom you have written CC; Roffman and Bernabei. I think it was unkind of you to neglect Gary, so I will not. I mean, you two are sharing this good-conscience, kick, so why not do it right? Let him in on it.

Which reminds me. Robert phoned yesterday to say they are expecting and this means he must find a decent job. I suggested that he ask you to see if any of the people you knew at Bates could put him onto something, give him a lead, etc. At first he was reluctant, so I told him that what was between you and me had nothing to do with you and him, to ask you, that the worst you could do was say no. So, he then told me you had and that your reason was more or less that if he didn't work out you would in some way I can't understand suffer. So here we have two guys, one whose contributions are vocal and nothing else, whether or not they are contributions, a guy who runs no risk of any kind, but he is afraid that in some way he can get hurt if his good conscience prompts him to see if it is possible to help a friend who most certainly has run some risk and has made legitimate contributions, done serious, legitimate, original, worthwhile work. I need a new dictionary on "friend". And I just can't imagine from what I've seen of it that Robert is less than thoroughly proficient in his field. Which really leads to why I'm taking more time for you.

You really should try to understand yourself and what you say and do. I'm serious, not needling you. Look at your father. He certainly has a good intelligence, as you do. You don't want to get in that kind of shape but unless you put your head together, you are heading for serious trouble. Get mad or not, I'm really telling it to you like it is, and I don't think there is anyone who knows you in all of this and who will be honest who will disagree.

Let me begin with your opening stupidity, the kind of childishness that can appeal to you in your more immature moments only: "you should have eavesdropped on the CIA conversation with Cyril's secretary more closely." I didn't. I was not there. And nobody eavesdropped. Lil was sitting near Bud's secretary's desk waiting for me. I was in Bud's office, with the door close. Bob Smith was there, using the secretary's phone, just about within touching distance of Lil. As we left, Lil told me about this, and I went back and spoke to Bob. My knowledge comes from him, as does my knowledge that at a time where there was no hard feelings between Cyril and me, about a year ago, he had already spent about two months working on this stuff for Cyril. No eavesdropping, bugging or anything else. Bob volunteered it to me.

The part about "I never intended to Brief Cyril" is unworthy of serious comment. When I spend time with this kind of semantics it will be for a constructive purpose. What the hell else did you begin by stealing for? Later you say you never discussed this with me, or the other way around. Bullshit, Jerry. How else could you know I objected to it? We went into it in as much detail as your closed, strange little mind would permit. There is nobody to whom I spoke of whom this is not true, including Smith, Lesar, Fensterwald and Gary, quite aside from Howard, who I am sure will tell you that I told him to do what he thought right, not what he thought would serve my interest. Your defense of all this sneaky behind-the-back thievery is that it was essential to a proper briefing and you wrote and told me it is for this reason that you ~~intended~~ sent it to Cyril and gave it to Sylvia. And then you say you didn't know enough, which is true, but why admit this only selectively? Do you know anything about the contract, for example, or the transfers? Did you ask anything? Yet you would be honored, your word, to sit in, also your way and words. For what purpose? Because "I would not be able to contribute very much"? Come now, Jerry, even that immodesty is one of the larger exaggerations. You could, in fact, contribute nothing. And anyone with the slightest knowledge who didn't know this was disgustingly ignorant if he had any involvement. Including Cyril. Mostly.

"I don't think you have a right to judge Lifton." This is not thought. And his knowledge or lack of it ("he devoted many hours of study and preparation to help Cyril"-all sic) is irrelevant. He rationality is relevant. You knew he was sick. Or did you conceive that this is what he would use to help Cyril:

All those little men shooting undetected from all those papier-machier trees;

Other little men in all those secretly-constructed (by Brown & Root) tunnels through Dealey Plaza;

Proof that LBJ and Dulles (also instead of Dulles Rusk, take your choice, Lifton provides it) met in secret throughout Texas the week before the assassination plotting it.

Interesting that with all these years devoted to the subject suddenly Lifton had to "devote" all those "hours" to "study". Of what? Did the good conscience take care of his having new materials for study? And if this happened, of course, there having been no purpose in any of this except to deliver to the rabid Lifton the work of others he had not yet been able to steal (if you doubt, consult your partner who can, if he will more than document this, or consult Sylvia, who must have told you about Lifton, after her bitter experiences), the good if sick conscience of Lifton will respect the rights of others. Naturally. That is why he spends so much time inspying and stealing.

You overflow the flooded toilet further with the accusation following the ridiculous stuff about me, "on the other hand" choosing to set myself up "as the omniscient, divorcing yourself from the entire affair." Aside from what has happened proving how right I was in the very finest detail, it having already happened and I have forecast not only what did happen but what Graham would do, I did not, really divorce myself from this whole affair. Neither did Howard. Cyril had been seeking to keep this secret from me for a long time. I paid no attention to that for a long time also, but I was aware. And Howard did not divorce himself, either. The divorcing was by Cyril and the rest of you with inflated egos and diapered intellects. Howard stipulated that Cyril have nothing to do with the nuts as one of his conditions. He phoned Cyril several times when Cyril did not phone him in response to Howard's request that he do. And I never turned Cyril down. He didn't write me until after Sylvia got after him. I told him it would depend on existing conditions when it came to pass, that until I knew what was afoot I could not decide. But beginning long before Marshall okayed him, I did what I could, beginning with Graham when Howard overheard it and to the very last minutes, trying to protect Cyril and everyone else. I dare you to ask Howard on just this point the time I actually took. And whether I saw clearly and whether he thereafter tried to act on it and whether Cyril responded. So, instead of using a shove, with that with which you deal I think a rotrooter would be better. You are in all aspects whether a liar or what is no more complimentary, abysmally ignorant.

There was nothing "vague" about anything in my mind to those who would communicate, and despite your lies, this includes you. I wasted much time on this with you. Gary can confirm this, if he will, and I did it with him beginning long before it happened, beginning with Ned, as well as in person when I fetched him from Washington in January.

You use the phrase, "shit or get off the pot" bracketed with my long letter to Cyril. (You need no pot, most of yours coming from a vent higher in the body.) May I ask you to tell me when, where, how or any other way Cyril expressed any interest in the possibility of harm? He was and remains unconcerned about that. No, liar, I spelled it out to everyone who would take the time and I began by asking everyone to think independently, not to begin with my concepts alone. This includes unthinking you.

When at this point you express any question about my judgement, with the record made by Cyril, you disgrace yourself. There IS this record, would-be bigshot. Cyril has finally discovered, after all this time and based on his own work and nothing of the past, that the single-bullet theory is invalid. And, of course, that the Kennedys alone were responsible for all the suppressions.

When I told you this could result in nothing but the exculpation of those really responsible for the suppressions and the shafting of the Kennedys, in the burying of truth still deeper, you may say. This was going to bring the truth out. Sure yet. And all of it. Nothing like what was obvious to any with the common sense of the average, not exceptionally gifted, high-school kid. It took no great perception to understand its inevitability. Only you others had other lusts, and if you would have thought, you would have been blinded by them. You, in fact, having denied it all along, not gloat. You are ecstatic: "I am not at all upset with Graham's story [and your unique genius doesn't let you know whether or not Graham was full or accurate]. I think it's about time that someone put some blame at the door of the Kennedy family. Perhaps if they're pushed far enough they'll react. [Bobby reacted at San Fernando, remember? Remember what next happened?] At any rate, they're not lily white, [Only you are, Dick Daring Policoff, also known as God.] and they [all the kids, too?] deserve the scrutiny [sic] Graham put them under. [Do send me a copy of your revision of your magnus opus on the Times!] They've taken refuge under the mantle of a martyred family for far too long. [Hear, Oh Israel, the Lord they God is a God of wrath.] If all the blame wasn't out squarely where it belongs, that's life. [Please tell me how Graham or Cyril put any of it anywhere else. If this is life as you live it or want it, even your God can't help you.]

Furthermore, it's the Kennedy's own doing, not Cyril's or Graham's." [Odd you can't remember a simple name like Burke Marshall, when you are the guy who told me that he considers Jackie, not the family, is his client. But not remembering is kind compared to the flaunting of such pervasive ignorance of the most elemental fact.]

However, not having I-told-you-so's you, I do say still again, Q.E.D. You are one of those off on a get-Kennedy kick, and getting them was worth the cost.

Not that you can yet understand the remaining cost possible. Why contaminate such abundant proof of "good conscience" with understanding, why dilute it with fact. You do know anything if you don't know what is possible if Cyril's new demands are honored. But need God know, be he a little pipsqueak of a self-important, self-appointed God whose credentials are self-proclaimed ignorances unthinking hatred couched as no enemy could put it for him? Is it not enough that he conceives himself God? [Without the grass, that is.] ~~XXX~~ With a little good pot, there will be new heights, I am without doubt.]

Well, Abu Ben Damned, if this be love of either fellow man or truth, don't inscribe my name.

I have had long experience with self-exposure, self-condemnation, but I don't think I've ever seen anyone do as thorough and unequivocal a job as you did on yourself.

So, I tell you again, you'd better make some effort to put your head together before it is too late.

Gary- If you'd like a copy of his letter, I'll be glad to make and send it. HW
HR, RB (next day). Initially I did not intend to be as rough on Jerry because I am concerned about his emotional condition. Aside from having suffered his childish ways for some time, when he turned to Lifton it was utterly irrational. But as I got into it, I realized that he has never been amenable to soft reasonableness, would regard it as too uncharacteristic of me, and I came to feel that every interest, including his, is served by angering him. And, perhaps, shaming. He over-reacts, and the quote should be enough to tell you, as I'm sure you felt when you read it. So, with a little more angering, perhaps he'll come up with a bit more, and on the whole Ned thing I'm sure he can. That now looks more interesting, with his African-American outfit appearing to have or have had CIA connections. I'd be surprised if Sylvia could not shed some light on this because Ned appears to have courted both. And he blabbed to Jerry, who did to me. I think he'd have tried harder to impress Sylvia, would have detected her anti-Kennedyism early and might have catered to it. I'll not ask her, however, because I have no report on the state of her health and don't want to do anything that might have adverse effects. (I'm accumulating an envelope for her.) If either of you responds, he may, in turn, reply. I'd be interested in the tiniest crumbs.... Bearing on his rationality, I ask you to examine his reference to Lifton, what he doesn't say as well as what he does, what he omits and knows of Lifton's mental state. HW